



Human Relations Commission Meeting Minutes

June 28, 2021 7:00 PM

Zoom Virtual Meeting

West Orange NJ 07052

*Building Our Awareness. Engaging Our Community. Creating Change for Greater Inclusion.
West Orange Township Human Relations Commission*

This is to inform the general public that this meeting is being held in compliance with Section 5 of the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231, Public Law 1975. The annual notice was emailed to the Star Ledger and the West Orange Chronicle and filed in the Township Clerk's office on November 17, 2020.

1. Call to order

HRC Attendance 2021

Dr. David E. Jones, Chair; Commissioners Patrecia West, Elizabeth Milhim, Marguerite Foster, Shakira Adams, Dawn Adams, Dr. Joyce Harley, Dagmar Hobson

Guests: Maria Vera, Larry Weintraub, Karen Young, Justin Soto, Peter Kolbe, Denise Guanlao, and Caroline Harris

2. Commissioners Check-In: "Rose and Thorn" sharing to build trust across Commissioners

- Pat - Senior line dancing was a big hit
- Marguerite - Enjoyed Juneteenth celebration in WO; keep it historical
- Cindy - Community came out to celebrate Juneteenth; WO Arts Council also did a great job
- Maria - Excited about Juneteenth celebration; Pat's speech was a highlight
- Dagmar - Happy with how the HRC is progressing
- Shakira - Pride event had a great turnout and included children; got to know Dawn
- Liz - Juneteenth events were amazing; enjoyed the WO Arts Council exhibit
- Joyce - Participated in five other municipalities' Juneteenth celebrations and thought WO's was the best in terms of the variety of collaborators, speeches, and events
- David - Happy to see how the planning for Juneteenth came together

3. Acceptance of minutes of the last regular meeting of the Commission

- Joyce motions to accept, Marguerite seconds, all approve

4. Report - Chairperson Update

- General Updates & Acknowledgements
 - A lot of great work by the commissioners between Pride and Juneteenth
 - Volunteers stepped up and supported at all events
 - Collaboration key to work of HRC
- Communication
 - Be mindful of how we communicate and aim to be more concise; fewer email threads
- Program Planning
 - Commissioner board is relatively new, so many programs are new to some members

- Try to plan in advance as much as possible
- Budgets need to be presented before event so HRC can vote on expenses
- Joint HRAC Meeting- July 20th at 7pm (Check email for Zoom info)
 - Commissioners invited via email to attend

5. Acceptance of the consent agenda

Community Issues

- Caroline provided update on behalf of Shelley (volunteer) and Pat
- Planning September kick-off event themed “what I learned about myself during the pandemic”
- Joyce provided positive feedback - subject appropriate given where we are with COVID
- Pat - give people the opportunity to share something about what they learned about themselves and how to move forward
- Cindy suggested a collaboration with the library; Caroline will follow-up

Heritage Months

- Phenomenal job as a commission to celebrate heritage months
- HRC will identify what months to focus on
- Rabbi Tobin and Asmeret to provide update in July
- Pat - reach out to different organizations and groups to get them involved in this process; will help spread the word

6. Old business

- Pride – David and Cindy on behalf of Rob
 - David - great flag raising and car parade event; residents and children came together; gratitude to Gia and Leslie and their integral role in making the ceremony possible
 - Cindy - conversation started with the Mayor about getting another flagpole in order to keep flags permanently at Town Hall (response to Pat’s question)
- Juneteenth – Rob, Joyce, David, Liz, Dawn, Asmeret
 - Team shared feedback and learning:
 - Dawn - Need signage within the Colgate Park community to promote the event
 - David - Need to reach audience that don’t use online platforms
 - Pat - Show a way to thank the surrounding community while also promoting the event
 - Joyce - Reach out to media outlets well in advance to cover the events
 - Cindy - Reach out to Township PIO so he can send notice out to newspapers and media outlets
 - David - Make improvements in comms with other orgs so events don’t overlap or conflict
 - Dagmar - Start earlier and coordinate events so people don’t have to decide which to go to
 - Pat - Plan among different orgs to create a joint calendar of events so we can support each other
 - Joyce - Create a strategy starting with MLK as a pilot and coordinate with other orgs
 - Cost Vote- DJ Chris \$150
 - Joyce motions to approve, Dagmar seconds, all in favor
 - David to send steps for payment to Joyce
- Diversity Enrichment program at Renna House
 - Engage with Seniors in the Fall and enlighten them about issues affecting nation and community
 - David will be looking for volunteers to help facilitate workshop
 - Pat - Schedule line dancing again; first Fridays? Will reach out to Rosary and come back with recommendations
- HRC Tabling at Farmer’s Market
 - David - We can get a table at no charge for one of the upcoming Saturdays

- Joyce – Can volunteer after July; closer to September
- Maria Vera can help in August
- Dawn – Alternative idea: walk around and interact without a table; hand out HRC flyers

7. New business

- HRC [Budget](#)
 - Balance as of today, includes \$150 for DJ Chris = \$3,328
 - Needs to cover MLK program, which can cost \$1500-2000 (most of that may go to notable speakers)
 - MLK - Opportunity to co-sponsor with another org to help increase the budget
 - MLK will be on August meeting agenda and identify subcommittee to start planning; goal to finalize before December holidays
- August Small Business Block Party
 - Cindy - Feedback from Town Counselors:
 - One of the concerns regarding the budget is overtime for DPW and PD
 - Helped to highlight businesses
 - Some tables purchased were by non-WO businesses; focus should be on WO businesses
 - 2020 Event was an HRC event
 - Dawn – Find out where money generated from table purchases goes
 - Cindy - Make sure political campaigns aren't included
 - David - Convene Councilwoman Williams to discuss how to expand on 2020 event
 - Joyce - Business Access and Opportunity subcommittee to organize; Shakira and Erik Lemons to join as well as Dawn and Liz
 - Pat – Will speak with Chamber of Commerce
- HRC Commissioner Summer Meet-Up - July 22nd or 23rd, 7pm at Bonds Tavern
 - Dawn – Recommended the Rock
 - Pick a night when there is live music
 - David will finalize and send an invitation

8. Other/Public Comment

Karen Young - Attended Juneteenth event and looking for new ways to get involved and volunteer; email provided and David to reach out

Community Awards

- David – Subcommittee needs to come back with proposed frequency and process for getting nominations; reminder to send subcommittee reports to David so can be included in the agenda

Music and/or Movie Nights

- Dawn – Suggestion to plan music night (celebrate different decades) or movie night to bring community together; like OSPAC
- Cindy - Recommended coordination with Parks and Recreation department who may have an inflatable screen; Bill Kehoe
- Pat - Recommends coordination with OSPAC
- Joyce - There might be a county-wide contract for movie and music use

Communication

- Caroline to demo Slack at the next meeting and share cost options

9. Adjournment

- 8:41 David motions to adjourn, Joyce seconds, all in favor

10. **Future Meeting Dates:** July 26, August 23

~ Fostering good will, cooperation and conciliation among groups in the Community ~